

THE

ל'פמ"ג

SHEKEL



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*Salvador Dali's REUBEN
Twelve Tribes of Israel*

OUR ORGANIZATION

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The American Israel Numismatic Association is a cultural and educational organization dedicated to the study and collection of Israel's coinage, past and present, and all aspects of Judaic numismatics. It is a democratically organized, membership oriented group, chartered as a non-profit association under the laws of The State of New York. The primary purpose is the development of programs, publications, meetings and other activities which will bring news, history, social and related background to the study and collection of Judaic numismatics, and the advancement of the hobby.

The Association sponsors major cultural/social/numismatic events such as national and regional conventions, study tours to Israel, publication of books, and other activities which will be of benefit to the members. Local chapters exist in many areas. Write for further information.

The Association publishes the SHEKEL six times a year. It is a journal and news magazine prepared for the enlightenment and education of the membership and neither solicits nor accepts advertising. All articles published are the views and opinions of the authors and may or may not reflect the views and opinions of A.I.N.A.

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Table of Contents

President's Message	
by Moe Weinschel.....	2
Israel's Early Finances tied to Anglo-Palestine Co.	
by Lance K. Campbell.....	3
Salvador Dali - Reuben State Medal	
by Edward Schuman.....	8
The Services of the Bene Israel of India	
in the Bombay Army	
by Anthony Pamm.....	10
The Agony of Heine	
by Peter S. Horvitz.....	14
A Russian Carmel Oriental Share	
by Sidney L. Olson.....	16
Some Unusual Judaica Numismatic Discoveries	
by Samuel Matalon.....	18
The Aleph Beth Page	
by Edward Janis.....	20
Israel's Money & Medals Update- 1992 State Medals	
by Dr. Gary P. Laroff.....	21
The Jewish Elixir	
by Stuart Schoffman.....	29
A Twist of History	
by Jonathan A. Herbst M.D.....	32
The Jewish Reinforcement Draft Company	
by Jack H. Schwartz.....	36
The Purim Half-Shekel	
by Rivka Toledano.....	38
Ike the Pike...A Passover Story	
by Shirlee Hecker.....	40
Services in the Sand	
by Mark Huber.....	42
The Free Coinage Gold Mining Co	
by Edward Schuman.....	44
The Club Bulletin	
by Donna Simms.....	45
AINA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION	47

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by MOE WEINSCHEL

Dear Member:

We have returned from our Florida visit and a number of A.I.N.A. items have been resolved. We worked in the storage warehouse, cleared out many excess files and in addition we are inventorying books and medals. In future issues, many bargain items will be offered to our paid up members.

One of the items resolved was the continued publication of supplements to the Haffner-Magnus/Kagan book (1988 edit.) We are planning to staple eight pages in the center of the SHEKEL so that they can be easily removed for inclusion in the loose leaf format (or any way chosen). We will start with the commemorative issues of 1989. The numbers will follow the original Haffner format but with two items to a page.

This is made possible through the generosity of Arnold H. Kagan, who holds the copyright. Dr. Gary Laroff will continue the great editing job that he started about a year ago and we know you will be pleased.

One thing not resolved in Florida or elsewhere is more membership and how to generate additional revenue. Our income from investments has declined and the money derived from conventions has deminished to zero. Please use the application in the back of each SHEKEL and sign up a member to the biggest \$15 bargain in numismatics. If you would like a complimentary copy of the SHEKEL sent to a prospective member, let Florence or Ed Schuman know. They will be happy to send one to the address you provide.

PLEASE NOTE WE ARE A NON-PROFIT 501C TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATION. DONATIONS ARE FULLY DEDUCTIBLE. HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN HELP.

- 1) When you pay your dues, please include a donation for some of the many listed items on the dues reminder.
- 2) Consult your financial advisor about a donation and/or legacy to A.I.N.A.
- 3) If you are a life member and exempt from dues, please note that your money in the life member's fund earns less than half of regular membership. If at all possible, please make a deductible donation. If you are a regular member and have paid dues, the same applies.

As of this writing, there are 38 participants for the AINA. tour to Israel. No doubt, we will fill up the 45 passenger coach. The next issue will have the tour story and perhaps next year we can have two busses.

SHALOM

Israel's Early Finances Tied to Anglo-Palestine Company *by Lance K. Campbell*

One of the easiest ways for a paper money collector to expand his collection to other areas is to acquire financial history documents from the same banks that issued the notes held in their collections.

One of my areas of interest is the bank note emissions of the Anglo-Palestine Bank. Fortunately, this is one bank that issued stock certificates, debentures, checks and banknotes under a variety of different names.

The roots of the Anglo-Palestine Bank, the most important financial institution in the history of Israel, go back to the very late 19th century. The second Zionist Congress, while meeting in London, voted to establish a financial institution that would be dedicated to monetary developing a Jewish state in Palestine; a Jewish state that would one day become Israel. The idea for such an institution was originally put forth by Theodor Herzl in 1891.

And so, at the turn of the century the Jewish Colonial Trust was created as the financial instrument that would eventually lead to the creation of a Jewish state. The trust was originally capitalized at £2 million sterling. When £250,000 worth of shares were sold, the Jewish Colonial Trust was allowed to begin operations as a corporation.

Each share was valued at £1. The shares were on sale for three years before the required quarter of a million pounds' worth were sold. Jews from, all over the world purchased shares, not so much for a financial investment, but as an investment in the dream of a homeland.

Stock and bond dealers occasionally have these in their inventory and they can also be found at auctions. Pristine examples are almost never seen. Most look well handled. They normally retail in the \$50.-\$100 range.

In 1903, the Anglo-Palestine Company was formed to conduct business on behalf of the original Trust. The Anglo-Palestine Company was in fact a bank in every sense of the word except that it did not have the power of currency issue. At that time, Palestine was a part of the Ottoman Empire and the French franc was the preferred currency even though Turkish and other currencies were also in use.

A number of financial documents are available to collectors that detail the rise of the Anglo-Palestine Company. The most often seen are stock certificates and checks. The majority of surviving stock certificates were issued during the first decade of the company's existence. Most are found with one or more orange British tax stamps that total one shilling six pence. I have never seen a share certificate for a large number of shares although the undoubtedly exist. All certificates I've seen are for one or two shares.

One of the frustrating things about collecting shares from the Anglo-Palestine Company is that most have been canceled. They were overstamped CANCELLED in both Hebrew and English text, and then they were cut canceled. Each certificate was signed by two parties; the secretary and one of the company's directors. The cut cancels are directly over those signatures. The company seal is also cut canceled. The stamp is not so bad, but the cuts really tend to diminish the certificates' attractiveness.

The checks make another interesting collectible. There were several different branches of the Anglo-Palestine Company in the Holy Land, and each branch issued its own checks. Prior to World War I, branch offices were opened in Beirut, Gaza, Haifa, Hebron, Jaffa, Jerusalem, Safed and Tiberias. Collectors wanting a type set can put together a collection containing a check from each of the branch offices.

The largest of these branch offices, and also the first to be opened was the Jaffa Bank. The Jaffa checks are also the most frequently encountered. Remember that the French franc was the preferred currency at that time and that is how the checks are denominated.

The most valuable of the Anglo-Palestine Company checks are the registered checks issued during World War I. During the war, the Anglo-Palestine Company branch offices found themselves in an uncomfortable position. In 1914 Germany declared war on Russia.

Turkey was expected to, and later did, in fact, enter the war as a German ally. Great Britain was considered an enemy country and the Anglo-Palestine Company was a very English corporation.

There was widespread fear in the financial community of what would happen to the bank assets. The bank's answer was to distribute the assets to various individuals (described in official documents as "trustworthy people") in the community. Registered checks were then printed and distributed to these same people who signed them and then put them into circulation as a type of emergency currency. They were readily accepted by merchants and businesses in the Jewish community.

These were issued in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 francs. Two different series are known. The first has a partial date of "190" in the upper right corner. The name of the printer, "Industrial Druckerie, Wien" is found in the lower right hand corner. The second series has a partial date of "191" in the upper right hand corner. "Second Series" is printed at the upper left.

These were extremely rare at one time. A small hoard came out in recent years and today they can be purchased in the \$250-\$400 range at auction. Even with the dispersal of the hoard they are still quite scarce.

The difference between the Anglo-Palestine Company and the Anglo-Palestine Bank has been a confusing point for many in the Judaic numismatics arena. Past articles and books frequently use the

two interchangeably. I've read articles about the Anglo-Palestine Bank doing business in 1903 and thereabouts and the Anglo-Palestine Company doing the same thing in the 1940's. Many articles have similar incorrect statements or have glossed over the difference completely.

Were the two one and the same? Yes they were, but the names should not be used interchangeably. The answer to this problem can be found on the back of many Anglo-Palestine Company share certificates. The stamped text begins by stating how the capital of the company was raised to various amounts during various years. It goes on to say "On the 1st January, 1931, the title of the company was changed to the ANGLO-PALESTINE BANK, LTD." It then goes on about other administrative details

So, the company became the bank in 1931. Though the name changed, the function remained substantially the same, the same that is until 1948.

In the months prior to the declaration of Israeli independence, a decision was made to have new paper money produced that would be used in the new State of Israel. The new country would need a central bank to control the production and flow of paper currency. The task fell to the most capable candidate. Along with its other functions, the Anglo-Palestine Bank would be the central bank for Israel with the right of currency issue.

The bank was faced with an immediate problem; How to get the new paper currency printed in a timely manner. The decision to have notes prepared was made in the January-February 1948 time frame. The notes were required to be in hand and ready for distribution no later than May 1948 when independence would be declared. At the time the decision was made the Anglo-Palestine Bank was not as yet a central bank because Israel was not as yet a country.

This complicated the process of getting banknotes printed. S. Hoofien, manager of the Anglo-Palestine Bank was tasked with getting the job done. Hoofien was a long time veteran of the bank. He came to the Anglo-Palestine Company as an assistant manager shortly after the company was organized.

After much negotiating, the American Bank Note Company agreed to process the order. Time was very sensitive at this point. The order was not placed until February and the notes were required a mere three months later. ABNC expedited the order and had it ready in record breaking time. The first print run was made in late April, 1948 and the notes were delivered the following month.

Several different print runs were made between 1948 and 1951 of notes in denominations of 500 mils, £1, £5, £10 and £50. The £50 is the rarest of all with a total print run of only 250,000. Only a handful of the £50 notes survive today in collections.

Not long after the final print run of £5 notes was made in September 1951, the bank once again changed its name; The new

THE ANGLO-PALESTINE BANK LIMITED.

SHARE CAPITAL £1,000,000

250,000 GUARANTY SHARES OF £1 EACH NUMBERED 1 TO 250,000 INCLUSIVE.
250,000 41 PER CENT PREFERENCE SHAREABLE PREFERENCE SHARES OF £1 EACH NUMBERED 1 TO 250,000 INCLUSIVE.
500,000 "A" ORDINARY SHARES OF £1 EACH NUMBERED 1 TO 500,000 INCLUSIVE.

It is to be noted that Matatyahu Luzz...
of the Anglo-Palestine Bank Limited, Haifa, Palestine.
where the Registered Office is at One

Share of £1 each fully paid, numbered as per margin
in THE ANGLO-PALESTINE BANK LIMITED, subject to the
Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Company

Given under the Common Seal of the Company
the 15th day of July 1926

J. Haef...
J. J. ...
for

NUMBER OF SHARES	DISTINCTIVE NUMBERS	
	FROM	TO
1	594457	

22/9/21 p102 RB

DEBENTURE.

No. 160
Frs. 1,000

THE ANGLO-PALESTINE CO. LIMITED
התאגדות אנגלו-פלסטינה בע"מ

No. 160
Frs. 1,000

Received from the RUDOLPH SCHWABER NATIONALFONDS (Rosa Schmidt La Jure), Limited, the sum of Frs. 1,000 (One Thousand Francs) on a deposit at 4% (Four per cent.) interest per annum payable half-yearly, to be repaid to the Bearer of this Debenture under and subject to the conditions on the back hereof.

התאגדות אנגלו-פלסטינה בע"מ קיבלה מרודולף שוואבר נאציאנלפונדס (רזא שמידט לא יורה) לימטד, סכום של 1,000 פרנק (אלף פרנק) כדמי בטוחה בריבית של 4% (ארבעה אחוזים) לשנה, שישולם פעם בחצי שנה, תחת ובעד תנאים המפורטים על גבי הדבנטורה הזאת.

HAIFA, the day of 1926
THE ANGLO-PALESTINE COMPANY, LIMITED



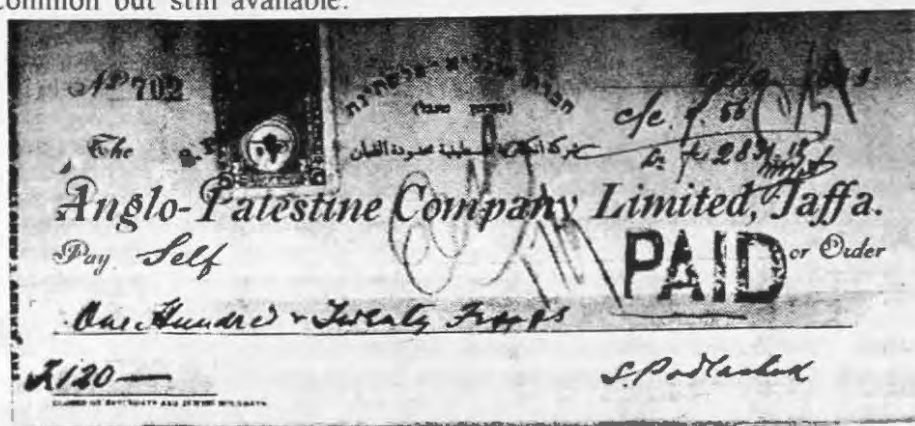
title being Bank Leumi Le-Israel B.M. The name change finally put an end to the colonial association with England that started a half century earlier when the original bank was born.

What today's collector is left with is a rich legacy of financial documents and notes to trace the history of the Anglo-Palestine Bank. Starting with the Jewish Colonial Trust, the most popular collectibles are the share certificates although checks are also available.

Probably the largest body of financial history connected with the bank is associated with the Anglo-Palestine Company, with checks being the most widely available collectible. Besides checks, a variety of different share certificates are commonly found.

One interesting category of certificates that I had not previously mentioned are the debentures issued by the company for funds received from the Jewish National Fund. Most of these were issued during the early years of the company's existence. They are printed in both Hebrew and English and are denominated in French francs.

Bank notes are the most commonly found collectible of the Anglo-Palestine Bank era. The smaller denominations, especially the £1, are within the reach of most collectors. The share certificates are less common but still available.



Salvador Dali State Art Medals - The Twelve Tribes of Israel

R E U B E N by Edward Schuman

The Tribe of Reuben is descended from Reuben, Jacob's first born son. It is the subject of the second medal issued by the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corp. in the Salvador Dali "Twelve Tribes of Israel" medallic art medal series.

In Bereshith 30:14-17 it reads:

"And Reuben went in the days of the wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and he brought them unto Leah his mother; then Rachel (Jacob's other wife) said to Leah, "Give me, I pray thee, (some) of thy son's mandrakes."

And Leah said unto her, "Is it not enough that thou hast taken my husband; and wouldst thou also take away my son's mandrakes?"..And Rachel said, "therefore shall he (Jacob) repose with thee tonight for thy son's mandrakes."

And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, "Unto me thou must come in; for surely I have obtained thee as a reward with my son's mandrakes." And he lay with her that night.

And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son called Issachar."

Reuben's act of loyalty to his mother, was the contributing factor for the birth of his brother. The Salvador Dali painting used for the Twelve Tribes of Israel State Medal depicts Reuben giving his mother a mandrake flower in the background, and in the forefront an image of the flower, a red mandrake.

The reverse side of these uniquely designed oval shaped medals is engraved with a bas-relief of the seven branched candelabrum, which is also based on Dali's etching. Around the Menorah is a circle of joyful *HORA* dancers, a picture which was used to exemplify the State of Israel in its early, pioneering years.

A color photograph of both sides of the medal, is once again used as the illustration for the front cover of the SHEKEL. The Zebulum medal was used similarly on the November-December 1993 issue.

At the time of the Exodus, the tribe counted 46,500 males over the age of twenty (Num. I. 20-21, ii,11), which number was reduced to 43,730 by the plague with which the Israelites were punished for their worship of Baalpeor (ib. xxvi. 7). During the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness, the position of the Reubenites was on the south side of the Tabernacle.

The tribe, headed by its prince Elizur ben Shedeur, and having on either side the tribes of Simeon and Gad, was the total of the entire southern camp, so that the later was called "the camp of Reuben" (ib. ii, 10). At the time of the marching, the host of the Reubenites was required to start second, after that of the Judahites (ib.ii, 16). At the dedication of the alter, the prince of the Reubenites brought his offering on the fourth day (ib. vii. 30 et.seq.).

The Reubenites are recorded as the possessors of a large quantity of sheep, on account of which they asked Moses to station them on the east of the Jordan where there was ample pasturage. Moses granted their request after obtaining their promise that they would help the other tribes in the conquest of the land west of the Jordan (ib.xxxii,1 et. seq.).

As to their territory, two accounts are given: 1) In Num. xxxii, 37-38 it is stated that the Reubenites "built Heshbon, Elealeh, Kirjathaim, Nebo, Baal-meon, and Shibmah", the names of which cities were changed. 2) A fuller account is given in Josh., xiii, 15, according to which the border of Reuben's territory was "from Aroer that is on the bank of the River Arnon...and all the plains of Medeba." It is further stated that their territory included all the cities of the plain and all the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites. On the west side, the Jordan was the boundry of their territory.

In I Chron. v.8, it is stated that Reubenites of the Joel family lived at Aroer in the time of Jotham, King of Judah. The Reubenites as well as their neighbors, the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, fulfilled their promise to help the other tribes in their conquest of the land west of the Jordan. The Reubenites participated in the building of the 'great alter to see to" (ib.xxii, 10). After the conquest, the tribe of Reuben is generally associated with that of Gad.

A ruby, with the name Reuben engraved upon, was the first stone in the first row of the breastplate worn by the High Priest. The red flowers on the Reuben medal brings this ruby to mind..

In the time of Saul, the Reubenites are stated to have made war with the Hagarites, who fell by their hand (I Chron. v.10). After the assassination of Ishbosheth, the Reubenites joined with the other tribes in proclaiming David, king of all Israel.

In I Chron. v.6 18-22, it is recorded that the Reubenites, like their neighbors dwelt east of the Jordan until they were carried away in captivity.

The Salvador Dali Twelve Tribes of Israel State Medal series, as are all coin and medal issues of Israel Government Coins and Medals, are available for purchase from the A.I.N.A. new issues office. Your purchases through A.I.N.A., provide your organization with much needed commission revenue. Profits from the sale of IGCME items are used to provide a source of income for Israel's need in landscape conservation..

The Services of the Bene Israel of India in the Bombay Army by A.N. Pamm

According to the legend: some two thousand years ago, seven men and seven women were cast ashore at Navgoan, near Alibag, India, the sole survivors of a wrecked ship carrying refugees fleeing the persecutions of foreign occupiers of the Holy Land.

Their descendants preserved some of the religious beliefs and customs of Israel whilst following the occupations of oil-presser and farmer and remaining settled in villages in the region of the Konken coastal strip, a miniscule minority group amongst the teeming hundreds of millions of the population of India.

Some are known to have followed military careers in the armies and navies of native rulers (Abyssinian rulers of Janjira, the Angria and the Peshwas) in relatively modern times.

When Bombay came under British control and the Honourable East India Company Government pursued a policy of religious toleration and freedom of conscience, many of the Bene-Israel began to settle there and from about 1750 onwards, many of their young men entered military service in the ranks of the H.E.I.C. Bombay Army, and soon secured for themselves, by their bravery, ability and fidelity, many of the senior positions that opened to native Indians.

During a period ranging from circa 1750 to the early 1890's, approximately 19% of the Bene Israel men served either in the Bombay Army regiments or in the Indian Subordinate Medical Dept. Their achievements were out of all proportion to their numbers in both the general population and in the army itself. The entire Bene Israel population was probably in the region of 5000 in 1800 and 10,000 according to the 1891 census, yet they provided a substantial proportion of those securing staff appointments and reaching native officer rank (Jemedar, Subedar, Subedar-Major) in the Bombay Native Army. Incomplete research has produced a listing of approximately 35 Subedar-Majors (Native Commandants), 115 Subedars and 17 Jemedars. These figures relate only to army regiments.

They were not members of a privileged class who might enjoy easy access to senior positions. They started at the very bottom as recruit boys and worked their way through various increments of rank to the top during careers spanning on average thirty years. In 1892 there were in total only 413 Jews (Bene Israel) and Christians (Goanese) in the 22 Bombay regiments. This was the time for the death-knell for career opportunities for the Bene Israel in the Bombay Army for, in the early 1890's a caste/ class system was introduced in terms of which regiments were to be officered by men of the same caste as the non-commissioned ranks who were also to be organized in caste/class companies, squadrons and regiments.

The small Bene Israel population could obviously not produce enough recruits to form a separate Bene Israel regiment nor could Bene Israel officers now be promoted into command positions in regiments made up of men of a different caste. Those in service at the time served out the remainder of their careers, some as Subedar-Majors and Subedars in the 12nd Rajputana Infantry and in military police battalions. When the first World War broke out, there were very few left in service and these were mainly in the Indian Subordinate Medical Department.

The community provided a new manpower contribution during, and for the duration of the war. A few with medical qualifications held King's Commissions in the Indian Medical Service and a few more held commissions in the Indian Army.

Still later on, a number of the Bene Israel are recorded as having reached senior commissioned rank during the Second World War, and after the independence of India in 1947. At the time of the independence of India, the community numbered around 30,000. Of these approximately two thirds migrated to Israel subsequent to the founding of the Jewish State in 1948.

Reverting to the period 1750-1890, the heyday of the involvement of the Bene Israel within the Bombay Army, the following facts and anecdotes are worthy of record.

Whilst not as extensively employed as the larger Bengal Army, the Bombay Army saw its fair share of campaign service, not all of which was rewarded by service medals as evident from the biographies of some of the Bene Israel officers which mention many campaigns and actions (some of a policing nature) which were not medallically rewarded.

Besides the award of campaign service medals, a number of Bene Israel native officers were admitted into the Order of British India.



This award originated with the Honourable East India Company Bombay Army to reward its Indian officers for outstanding, long and commendable service. The order consists of two classes, both in gold, with enamelled centers which were worn around the neck. In 1830, as an example, Subedar Daniel Khurrilkar received one of these rarely awarded gold service medals of the Indian Government for his "gallant conduct when in command of a detachment on the 1st April 1830 in protecting valuable public property from being plundered by a gang of Bheels."

One of the most notable of the early Bene Israel native officers was Samuel Ezekiel Divekar, one of eight sons of a farmer, all of whom served in the Bombay Army (six were killed in action), only Samuel and Isaac, both Subedar Commandants, surviving military service.

In 1783, Samuel , who had joined the army in 1750, was captured, along with others, by Tipu Sultan, who executed the European prisoners. The native prisoners were faced with the usual choice of conversion to Islam or death. However, the bearing and deportment of Samuel and the other Bene Israel captives and an intercession for mercy on their behalf by Tipu's mother, Fakhrunnissa, swayed Tipu to commute their death sentences to imprisonment, and later they were released after conclusion of a peace treaty in 1784.

Samuel had vowed that, should he survive this captivity unhurt, he would build a synagogue for the Bene Israel community at his own expense. In 1794, four years after Samuel's retirement from military service, the "Gates of Mercy" Synagogue was established by him. This is the oldest synagogue in Bombay.

Besides the eight Divikar brothers, there are a number of instances of brothers, fathers and sons, reaching senior officer rank. Worthy of mention are the brothers Maliekar, both Sirdar Benadurs and in succession Subedar-Major of the 12th Rewgiment. The same distinctions were received by the brothers Zavlikar, successively Subedar-Majors of the 3rd Regiment.

Fortunately for those interested in their history, biographical details and, in some cases, portrait photographs of a limited number of Bene Israel native officers have survived.

The photographs show them in uniform, wearing their medals and, in many cases, the neck ribbon and badge of the order of British India. Many have impressive beards which remind one of a descriptive phrase used in a recent letter by a descendant, himself a retired Lt. Colonel of the Indian Army : "The old bearded heros."

The Indian Order of Merit, the first class in gold, second and third class in silver, and the Indian Title Badge , first class Diwan Bahadur for Moslems, Sardar Bahadur for Hindus, 2nd class Kwan Bahadur for Moslems, Rai or Rao Bahadur for Hindus, and 23rd class, Kwan Sahib for Moslems and Rai or Rao Sahib for Hindus are among medals awarded to Bene Israel soldiers in the Bombay Army.





Sirdar Bahadur
Solomon Isaac Zawlikar



Subedar Abraham Samuel Divekar

Many of the biographies include testimonials from the British officers of the regiment. In some cases, it is recorded that after the death of as Bene Israel native officer, the British officers erected a monument or established a memorial fund in his memory at their own expense. Some biographies mention specific acts of gallantry, distinguished service or loyalty. Campaigns most frequently mentioned are Scinde, Punjab, Indian Mutiny (wehere the Bene Israel were loyal to a man), Persia, Abyssinia 1868 and Afghanistan 1878-1880.

A list of over forty names of Bene Israel native officers who had reached the rank of Subedar-Major or have been admitted into the Order of British India has been compiled which is not to be regarded as complete. The surviving numismatic legacy of the Bene Israel are various British-Indian orders, decorations and medals awarded to the Bombay Army by the Government of the Honorable East Indian Company until the Indian Mutiny and the Imperial Indian Government thereafter.

Editor's note: Anthony Pamm is an astute collector of military decorations and medals who now spends his time between Capetown South Africa and London. We had the pleasure of having dinner with him several years ago when we were in South Africa.

The Agony of Heine by Peter S. Horvitz

Heinrich Heine (1797-1856), the greatest of German lyric poets, has often appeared on coins and medals. For instance, he appears on a 1972 10 mark coin of East Germany. He is almost always shown in his youth, a vital man and poet with his life and dreams before him.

This is the way we usually represent people. If we cannot have youth, at least let us see the subject at the height of his powers. If we see a man's face, we assume we know what he looks like. We do not give much respect to the knee, the back of the neck, or the tongue. So, the vigorous period of a man's life is looked upon as most typical.

It is, therefore, with some shock that we first look at H. Kautsch's plaque of Heinrich Heine, not as a youthful, confident poet, but a sick, tormented man, sitting in a beautifully carved chair in a crumpled coat. He is bent over his crushed papers, that he can no longer regard, his hands folded over his knees holding a quill pen. He stares at something in the distance past his feet, but with no concern. In 1848, Heine, self-exiled from Germany and living in Paris, was struck down with a series of medical disorders that rendered him an invalid for the remainder of his life. He was paralyzed and his body was wracked with cramps. His vision was affected to the point where he was nearly blind. Heine would never leave his sickroom until his death. He described his chamber, in a famous phrase, as his "mattress crypt." This is how he described himself at this period. "All I am now is a poor Jew sick unto death, an emaciated image of wretchedness, an unhappy man."

But Heine, overcoming tremendous difficulties, continued to write. Indeed, out of his suffering Heine found new inspiration and strength for his creativity. The inscription on the reverse of this plaque reads in English translation, "From my great pain I make small songs." H. Kautsch, an Austrian medallist, produced his design for the Vienna mint. It is struck in bronze and measures 45 millimeters by 75 millimeters and is tablet shaped. The obverse shows the suffering poet as I've described him, seated in a chair. Over him is bent a branch of bay. To the right of him are his dates 1797-1856, with a star before the birth date and a cross before the death date. Behind the poet is the signature of the medallist. Beneath the figure is a plaque with his name Heinrich Heine, beautifully rendered in art nouveau style letters.

The reverse shows an allegorical female figure flying in the clouds and wearing a halo of stars. She is bearing three wreaths, apparently planning to place them on the monument to Heine depicted near the bottom of the scene. Another wreath seems to be floating in the sky.

The monument is already decorated with another wreath and a bay branch caught in fog. The sun is rising or setting behind the monument.

The artist's signature appears again on the bottom left. The German inscription, within quotation marks, is written in art nouveau letters. It has been quoted above in English.

This medal is undated, but it was exhibited at the New York International Medallion Exhibition of March, 1910. The style of the plaquette would indicate that it was executed very close to the time of that exposition.



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A Russian Carmel Oriental Share **By Dr. Sidney L. Olson**

The juice of the grape is the subject of special praise in the Scriptures. The goodness of wine is reflected in the figure in which Israel is likened to a vine brought from Egypt and planted in the Holy Land, where it took deep root and prospered (Ps. LXXX. 9-11).

Viticulture, the process of growing grapes for use in wine making, was the primary crop of Baron Edmund de Rothschild's agricultural colonies he established in Palestine in the 1880's. The failure of certain species led to replanting with disease resistant varieties. Huge wine cellars were built at Rishon le Zion and Zichron Ya'akov by the Baron in this regard.

As a commodity, wine has an important place in the business world. A large portion of the trade in wine produced for the Feast of Passover is controlled by the Jews. The agricultural activity of Palestine, in the early part of the 20th century, is directly connected to viticulture. In 1902, the date of the illustrated Russian-Polish share certificate, the Rothschild cellars at Richon Le Zion received almost the entire produce of the Jewish colonists, which, through the Carmel Wine Company, was distributed throughout Russia, Austria, Holland, Switzerland, France, England and the United States. The vintage of 1904 in the Rothschild cellars exceeded 7,000,000 bottles of fine wine of which 200,000 alone were sold in Warsaw.

The share certificate is of the Society "Carmel Oriental" in Warsaw, and is printed on double side heavy buff color stock paper in a red-brownish color ink. The top vignette is a drawing of Palestine, showing the Mediterranean Sea, the Sea of Galilee, the Dead Sea and the Nile River.. On the bottom of the certificate is a vignette showing the familar scene of the two Hebrew spies returning with a large bunch of grapes carried on a stick between their shoulders, and the wording "Carmel Oriental". This has been adapted as a logo for the Carmel wines and is even in use today.

One side of the certificate is printed in Russian and the other side is in French. It is a share valued at 100 Rubles. There is a Russian revenue stamp affixed which has been canceled by an company officer's signature. There is also as well as a small stamp on the upper right hand corner, with a Star of David and some Hebrew letters, that has been canceled with a pen mark X. This may be a Kofer Haysod tax stamp as there is some Hebrew writing and the date 14/10/34 written in a light colored red ink close by.

The back outside blank cover has four different signatures written in Hebrew, which most probably meant that the share was sold or transfered several times. There is also a bankers endorsement from a Jewish bank in Warsaw which is illustrated.

It is believed that this company was founded in Warsaw in 1902 as a distributor/agency for Carmel Oriental. Suprisingly, it is not rare.

19/10/34



№ 047

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19/10/34
№ 33



Some Unusual Judaica Numismatic Discoveries

by Shmuel Matalon

Most all Judaica share certificates we know of have their origin from the Holy Land. While only a few have survived from Palestine, under the Turkish rule, many different share certificates are known from Palestine, under the British Mandate, and of course from modern Israel today.

It is therefore unusual to come across the two illustrated items, which somehow were able to survive the ravages of World War II and the Holocaust.

The first one is from Kosice in Czechoslovakia, dated 1927 for one unit of 100 Kronen, of the Jewish Credit Trust. In German: Judische Kredit Genossenschaft. It was issued presumably to financially assist the Jewish population. Jews started living in Kosice more than 150 years ago, and had a full Jewish life with schools, libraries, synagogues etc. It was a seat of the Zionist movement and the JOINT. (American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee). Today, only a few Jews remain.

The fancy engraved border of this certificate contains many tiny figures of the Magen David. There is an elaborately engraved background which does not show in the photograph. However part of the German text can be seen. The vignette is of a Jewish farmer plowing a field with two horses.



The next certificate is from Roustchouk in Bulgaria. It was issued by the private firm of SHABETAI BEN JAICH and is for 10 shares of 1000 Levas each. In the border again are shown small Magen David symbols in the center of the designs. The certificate seal also has a large Magen David as well as one on the rubber stamp imprint which serves to cancel the affixed tax revenue stamp.

Here again was also a well established Jewish life with a large Beit Din, Central Consistory, and a strong Zionist and Hebrew movement. In 1949 there were about 15,000 Jews in Bulgaria, with most of them migrating to the New State of Israel.

Curiously, in the vicinity of the modern town of Beth Shemesh, in 1895, the village of Hartuv was founded by Bulgarian Jews. They bought the land from a training farm set up in 1883, some twelve years earlier, from the English Mission of Jerusalem, which tried unsuccessfully to convert Jerusalem Jews working there. Hartuv made little progress due to its isolation and the lack of water and good soil. In the 1929 Arab riots, the village was temporarily abandoned. It was again abandoned, but only for a few months, during the 1948 War of Independence, and finally fell to Israel forces on September 19, 1948.



IMPORTANT NOTICE

There are a number of A.I.N.A. members who have not yet paid their annual dues. We have mailed the first two issues of the 1994 SHEKEL to all 1993 paid members regardless of whether or not they paid for 1994. Please note that this will be the last issue we can send to delinquent members. We realize that some dues notices may have been mislaid or lost. If you have not already sent in your annual dues, won't you please do this today?

The ALEPH BETH Page

...Dedicated to the Beginner

by *Edward Janis*



Q. At a garage sale, I purchased a bronze token about the size of a half-dollar, that stated on the obverse that this was "Good for 50c in trade", and contained a swastika on the reverse. From research, I found out that this store existed from 1924 to 1930. Doesn't this prove that the Nazis were working here long before they were in Germany? H.R. Wichita, Ks.

A. The swastika is a symbol. A symbol is a sign by which a person associates a meaning or a relationship, an emblem or grouping. The symbol is therefore in the eye of the beholder AT A GIVEN TIME OR PERIOD.

In the Taoist religion and in Chinese decorative arts, the swastika is a much used basic unit, embodied on jade, ceramics and textiles. It signifies among other things: "Heart of Buddha", "long life", and "ten thousands". This usage reached its prime during the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties (1368-1912). The earliest appearance, as far back as we can trace, is from prehistoric pottery of Susa in Mesopotamia. The swastika has even been found in a lintel in Nawa, Ancient Judaea, that also contained a menorah! (The Tree of Light; L. Yarden.)

Here in the United States, the swastika, prior to Nazi Germany, appeared as a good luck sign on numerous store cards, good luck charms, and fair pieces. On many pieces, four leaf clovers were coupled in the design as additional symbols of "good luck".

Symbols, as I stated above, can mean a different thing during a different period of time. For example let's examine the six pointed star we call the Magen David or Shield of David. It is the center of the national flag of Israel. We see it on ceremonial objects in and on synagogues. On a tombstone it is a proud declaration that the individual whose name appears on the grave site was a Jew. These are the highest emblems of a symbol that is rooted with honor since the Middle Ages.

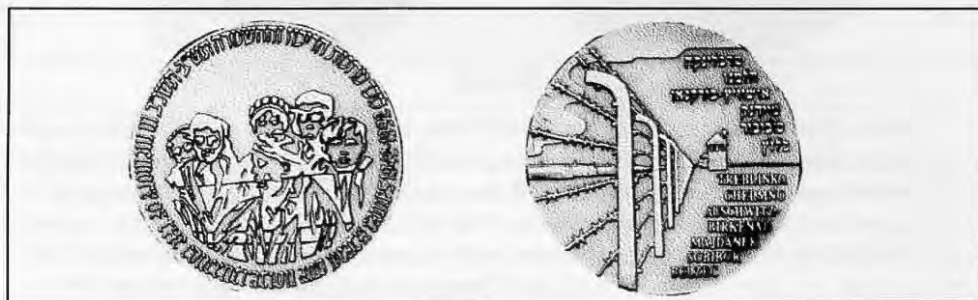
Along came the Nazis. This symbol, the Star of David, was looked upon as a disgrace when painted on a shop keepers window, or as worn as a shoulder patch by millions in ghettos and concentration camps during the greatest catastrophe in Jewish history. The swastika on your token denotes "good luck" and not Nazism.



ISRAEL'S & Money Medals UPDATE

by Dr. Gary P. Laroff
Update #5: State Medals 1992

In Memory of the Concentration and Death Camps, SM-141



SM-141

In January 1942, in Wannsee near Berlin, the Nazis made their final plans to solve the "Jewish Problem." After this, came the darkest and most horrific period in the history of mankind. Death camps were erected and European Jewry was brought to the gas chambers. The greatest tragedy of the Jewish people — the Holocaust — began, and only after the war, was the true extent of the horror to be discovered. Fifty years have elapsed since then, but the bitter memories of six million innocent people, inhumanely and untimely put to death, are still vivid. We will never forget, never let it happen again. The people of Israel live on!

Obverse: The figure of six children at Auschwitz, symbolizing the six million victims. Around the rim, in Hebrew and English, the inscription: "In Memory of the Concentration and Death Camps 1942-1992".

Reverse: An electrified barbed wire fence, a watch tower against a background of shacks and rising smoke. On the right side, in Hebrew and English, the names of the six death camps: "Treblinka, Chelmno, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Maidanek, Sobibor, Belzec."

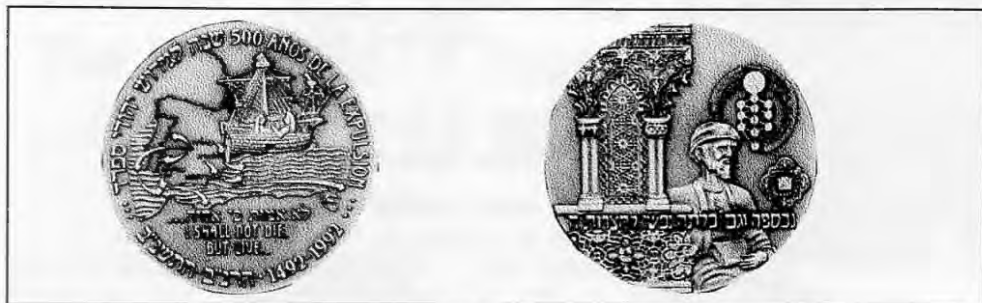
Edge: The words, "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English, and the Menorah. The silver medals are marked, "Silver .999" and the gold medals, "Gold 750." All medals are numerically serialized.

Designer: Obverse — Gabi Neumann; reverse — Abraham Pat

Mints: Gold medal — Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver and tombac — Kretschmer, Jerusalem.

✓	Haffner #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-141	1519-8703	1992	tombac	70	140		\$13.50
	SM-141a	2519-8501	1992	Ag/999	50	60		\$54.00
	SM-141b	3519-8309	1992	Au/750	30	15		\$292.00

500th Memorial of Expulsion of Jews from Spain, SM-142



SM-142

Before the expulsion, Spanish Jewry was culturally one of the richest and most flourishing of Jewish Communities, producing great world-famous rabbis, philosophers, poets and scientists. With the start of the Inquisition, events took a tragic turn and in 1492, the monarchs of Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella, signed the edict forcing the Jews to convert or leave the country. In three months they had to wind up their business, sell their property and decide their destinations. The Jews expelled from Spain numbered about 200,000. They were forbidden to take with them gold, silver, minted coins and many other things. This medal is a tribute to the immense spiritual and intellectual legacy of this unique Jewry, its bravery in the face of expulsion, and its tenacious belief in the G-d of Israel.

Obverse: In the center, a map of the expulsion showing the directions in which the Jews left Spain and a typical ship of the period. The inscription in Hebrew and English: "I will not die, but live...." Around the rim, in Hebrew and Spanish, "500 Years since the Expulsion from Spain 1492-1992."

Reverse: Wall of Synagogue of Shmuel Halevi Abulafia of Toledo, from the 14th century, with inscribed psalms. Jews in traditional dress of Spain during the Moslem rule. Seal of Todra Halevi and in the background, the spheres of the Kabbala.

Edge: "The State of Israel" in Hebrew and English and the Menorah. The silver medals are marked, "Silver 1000" and the gold medals marked, "Gold 22K" and "Gold 18K." All medals are numerically serialized.

Designer: Obverse — Natan Karp; reverse — Galia and Ilan Elsen.

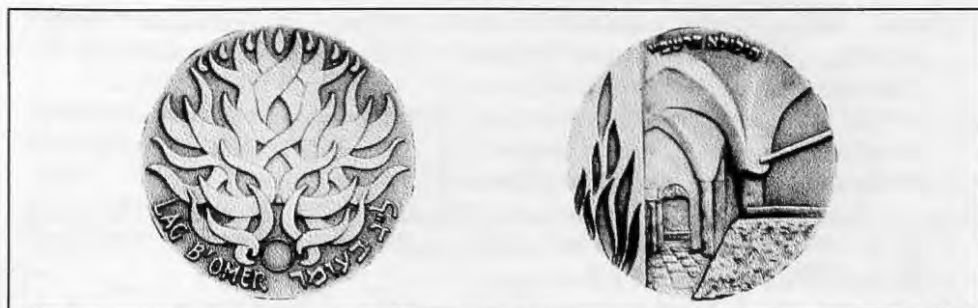
Mints: Kretschmer, Jerusalem

✓	Haffner #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-142	1519-5593	1992	tombac	59	98		\$11.00
	SM-142a	2519-5503	1992	Ag/999	50	60		\$54.00
	SM-142b	3519-5246	1992	Au/916.6	35	30		\$449.00
	SM-142c	3519-5351	1992	Au/750	24	10.36		\$170.00

Lag B'Omer, SM-143

This is the fourth medal issued in the "Jewish Holiday" series. "Lag B'Omer" celebrates the great teacher of Mishna, R. Shimeon Bar Yochai and has come to symbolize the light of the Jewish Mystics. It is a happy day and traditionally one on which weddings and other joyful events take place. "Lag B'Omer" is the thirty third day of the Omer, the 49-day period of counting which

begins on the second night of Passover and ends with Shavuot. At night, bonfires are lit to symbolize the Bar Kochba Revolt and the light of the Book of Zohar. It is also a custom for children to play with bows and arrows.



SM-143

Obverse: In the center, a stylized bonfire culminating in seven flames. Beneath it a wedding ring. On the bottom rim "Lag B'Omer" in English and Hebrew.

Reverse: The Tomb of Rabbi Bar Yochai in its hall, in front of an arched pillar. To the left, flames of a bonfire. The inscription, in Hebrew, on the top rim, "R. Simeon Bar Yochai celebrations."

Edge: "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English and the Menorah. The silver medals are marked "Silver .935." The tombac and silver medals are numerically serialized. The gold medals are milled.

Designers: Obverse — Ehud Shafrir; reverse — Ruben Nutels.

Mints: Gold and tombac medals — Kretschmer; silver — Israel Government Mint, Jerusalem.

✓	Haffner #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-143	1520-0592	1992	tombac	59	98		\$11.00
	SM-143a	2520-0374	1992	Ag/935	37	26		\$32.00
	SM-143b	3520-0180	1992	Au/750	18	4.4		\$99.00

Shoshana Damari - "Kalaniot," SM-144



SM-144

Spring in Israel is marked by the gorgeous beds of scarlet-headed poppies, which sway in the breeze as if in rhythm to Shoshana Damari's song, "Kalaniot." Shoshana Damari is known in Israel and abroad as the "Queen of Israeli Song." Uniquely, she has transformed song into painting and her beautiful artwork, Kalaniot (Poppies). When the "Yom Kippur War" broke out, Shoshana revealed her talents in the art of painting. The lively, colorful strokes of her brush depict

images described in her songs. Being doubly talented, Shoshana has been able to create a bond between song and painting, and has made it possible "to touch the song."

Obverse: In the center, a miniature color lithograph of Shoshana Damari's painting. Below, the word "Kalaniot" in Hebrew and English and the signature of the artist in Hebrew.

Reverse: In the center, a little shepherdess, with two sheep on the left and one on the right. Around the rim, in English and Hebrew, "The Little Shepherdess" on the right rim, the signature of the artist, "Shoshana" in English.

Edge: "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English and the Menorah. The silver medals are marked "Silver. 999" and the gold medals are marked, "Gold/585" all medals are numerically serialized.

Designer: Reproduction of Shoshana's creations — Ronit Berson.

Reliefs: Tidhar Dagan

Mints: Gold-22mm and silver-26mm — Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver 50 mm. and tombac — M. Hecht; silver 50 mm — Kretschmer.

Lithography: David Tamerin

✓	Haffner #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-144	1519-9597	1992	tombac	59	98	<5,000	\$25.00
	SM-144a	2519-9507	1992	Ag/999	50	60	<2,000	\$83.00
	SM-144b	2519-9264	1992	Ag/999	26	10	<2,500*	\$41.00
	SM-144c	3519-9224	1992	Au/585	22	7	<3,000*	\$146.00

Jerusalem Reunited - 25 Years, 1967-1992, SM-145



SM-145

This beautiful medal highlights two central themes associated with Jerusalem. The obverse depicts the City of Jerusalem as the City of Peace. The reverse recites the prayer "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem," which for centuries symbolized the centrality of Jerusalem for the Jews in exile throughout the world. With the reunification of Jerusalem 25 years before, Jerusalem had once again assumed its rightful place as the eternal capital of the Jewish State.

Obverse: The medal depicts Jerusalem as the "City of Peace", outlined by the dove of peace. The landmarks on the medal include, the Western Wall, Tower of David, the Knesset, Dome of the Rock, etc. Around the rim, in English and Hebrew, "Jerusalem Reunited" and the date "1967-1992" and its Hebrew equivalent.

Reverse: In the center, a Menorah, the emblem of the reunification. In its center, the inscription, "Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem" in Hebrew. Around the rim, "Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem", in English and Arabic.

Edge: "State of Israel" in English and Hebrew and the Menorah. The silver medals are marked, "Silver .999" and the gold medals are marked "Gold/750". All medals are numerically serialized.

Designer: Obverse — Rachel Timor; Reverse — Ruben Nutels.

Reliefs: Tidhar Dagan

Mints: Gold — Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver — Kretschmer, Jerusalem; tombac — Moshe Hecht, Tel-Aviv.

✓	Haffner #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-145	1520-1700	1992	tombac	70	140		\$13.50
	SM-145a	2520-1508	1992	Ag/999	50	60		\$54.00
	SM-145b	3520-1306	1992	Au/750	30	15		\$292.00

The Supreme Court, SM-146



SM-146

The Supreme Court is the highest judicial forum in the State of Israel. Together with the legislative arm (the Knesset) and the executive arm (the Government), the Judiciary — and the Supreme Court at its head — stands at one of the apexes of the triangle of the three authorities of the regime. This medal celebrates the opening of the new Supreme Court Building. The foundation stone was laid on April 29, 1987 and the building was opened in a state ceremony in November 1992.

Obverse: Hallway in Supreme Court Building. At its exit, a star of David symbolizing the Israeli law and righteousness which goes forth from the court. The verse: "Zion shall be redeemed by justice," Isaiah 1:27 in Hebrew and English.

Reverse: New Supreme Court building and "The Supreme Court" in Hebrew, English and Arabic.

Edge: State emblem, "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English, metal fineness and serial number.

Design: Jakov Enyedi.

Reliefs: Kretschmer, Jerusalem.

Minting: Gold and silver Medals — Government Mint, Jerusalem; tombac — Kretschmer.

✓	Haffner #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-146	1520-5704	1992	tombac	70	140		\$13.50
	SM-146a	2520-5374	1992	Ag/935	37	26		\$32.00
	SM-146b	3520-5300	1992	Au/750	30	15		\$292.00

500th Anniversary of the Discovery of America, SM-147



SM-147

This medal commemorates the 500th anniversary of the landing of Christopher Columbus on the shores of North America. Five hundred years ago, in 1492, Christopher Columbus decided to follow a dream: to explore the riches of the East by going West. "Through the Paths of the Seas" (Psalms 8,9), the voyage brought the sailor and his three boats to a discovery that changed reality forever.

Obverse: Statue of Liberty. In the background, elements associated with the New World: Edison's first electric lamp, a rocket on its way to the moon, nuclear atom, suspension bridge, plane, skyscrapers, Coca Cola bottle in a picture frame — symbol of American pop. "1492" in ancient type style, "1992" in modern style. Inscription: "The New World" in Hebrew and English

Reverse: Columbus's sailing ship with its sails blown by the wind, entering the Gulf of Mexico. To the left, the continent of America. The verse: "Through the paths of the seas," Psalms 8,9 in Hebrew and English.

Edge: State emblem and "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English, metal fineness and serial number.

Design: Abraham Patt

Reliefs: Kretschmer, Jerusalem

Minting: Gold medal — Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver and tombac — Kretschmer

✓	Haffner #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-147	1520-2706	1992	tombac	70	140		\$13.50
	SM-147a	2520-2504	1992	Ag/999	50	60		\$54.00
	SM-147b	3520-2302	1992	Au/750	30	15		\$292.00

Succot, SM-148



SM-148

This is the fifth medal issued in the "Jewish Holidays" series. Succot (Feast of Tabernacles) is known as the "Time of our Rejoicing," for the essence of this holiday is the rejoicing. Succot is also the "season of the ingathering," when the harvest is brought in from the fields. The feature of this holiday is the "succa," a temporarily built dwelling with roof of leaves or wood, which becomes the "permanent home" of the family for the week of Succot and in which the family brings four required plants: branch of palm, myrtle, willow and an the etrog, resembling a lemon.

Obverse: Four palm branches bound together in the shape of a succa and "Succot" in Hebrew and English.

Reverse: Ribbon binding four species and "You shall rejoice on your festival" in Hebrew.

Edge: Gold medal: milled. Silver and tombac show the state emblem, "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English, metal fineness and serial number.

Design: Obverse — Ehud Shafir; reverse — Ruben Nutels.

Reliefs: Kretschmer, Jerusalem

Minting: Gold and tombac medals — Kretschmer; silver — Government Mint, Jerusalem.

✓	Haffner #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-148	1520-4596	1992	tombac	59	98		\$11.00
	SM-148a	2520-4378	1992	Ag/935	37	26		\$32.00
	SM-148b	3520-4184	1992	Au/750	18	4.4		\$99.00

Menachem Begin, SM-149



SM-149

This medal was issued in the memory of Menachem Begin, sixth prime minister of the State of Israel. Begin was born on August 16, 1913 in Brisk, Lithuania (then Poland) and died on March 2, 1992. During his Knesset tenure and as prime minister, Begin was a leader with principles. He initiated the historic peace process with Egypt and signed the peace treaty which brought him the Nobel Peace prize.

Obverse: Portrait of Menachem Begin and "After my death I hope that I will be remembered above all, as the person who prevented civil war," and another quote, both in Hebrew and his signature in Hebrew and English.

Reverse: Star of David and a dove coming out of the left side of the star, breaking a steel chain, the caption "Fighters for freedom are those who hate war" in Hebrew and "Prime minister of Israel, Commander of the Irgun 1913-1922" in English.

Edge: State Emblem, metal fineness and serial number.

Design: Obverse — Ronit Salomon and Sharon Berman; reverse — Oswald Adler

Reliefs and Portrait Sculpture: Tidhar Dagan

Minting: Gold medal — Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver — Hecht; tombac — Kretschmer.

✓	Haffner #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-149	1520-6700	1992	tombac	70	140		\$13.50
	SM-149a	2520-6508	1992	Ag/999	50	60		\$54.00
	SM-149b	3520-6356	1992	Au/916.6	35	30	<1,250	\$449.00

Cameo of Love, SM-150



SM-150

This medal features two beautiful artistic creations by the artist Yosl Bergner, gently reflecting pure love and innocence. Yosl Bergner was born in Vienna in 1920, lived in and fought in World War II for Australia, then moved to Paris, Canada and then settled in Israel. In 1980 he received the Israel Prize.

Obverse: Color lithograph of Yosl Bergner's painting: a clown holding flowers.

The inscription: "Cameo of Love" in Hebrew and English. The artist's signature in Hebrew.

Reverse: Artwork of Yosl Bergner in relief: a clown on a wooden horse. The artist's signature in English.

Edge: "State of Israel," State Emblem, metal fineness and serial number.

Relief: Tidhar Dagan.

Minting: Gold and silver 26mm medals — Government Mint, Jerusalem; silver 50mm and tombac — Hecht, Tel Aviv.

✓	Haffner #	IGCMC #	Year	Metal	Diam. mm.	Wt. gm.	Final Mintage	Issue Price
	SM-150	1520-3702	1992	tombac	70	140	<3,500	\$27.00
	SM-150a	2520-3500	1992	Ag/999	50	60	<2,000	\$75.00
	SM-150b	2520-3267	1992	Ag/999	26	10	<2,000*	\$39.00
	SM-150c	3520-3382	1992	Au/916.6	38	33.93	<950	\$575.00
	SM-150d	3520-3227	1992	Au/585	22	7	<1,700*	\$135.00

Dr. Gary Laroff is working on updates to *Israel's Money and Medals* and is working closely with Sylvia H. Magnus and others on this effort. To contact him to offer data, assistance or for other purposes, write him at P. O. Box 39, Tualatin, OR 97062-0039.

The Jewish Elixir by Stuart Schoffman

from The Jerusalem Report

In 1899, the American genius Mark Twain published a quirky ambivalent essay in Harper's Monthly Magazine entitled, of all things, "Concerning the Jews."

Having lately been to Vienna, cauldron of anti-Semitism and birth place of Zionism, the author had Jews on his mind. "It's a marvelous race - by long odds the most marvelous race that the world has produced, I suppose."

"Concerning the Jews", ostensibly a rebuke of anti-Semitism, is an intriguing amalgam of admiration and resentment, a textbook example of the invisible borderline between philo-Semitism and the fear of Jewish power.



Upon reading the Encyclopedia Britannica in the late 1880's that there were 250,000 Jews in the United States, reports Mark Twain, "I wrote to the editor and explained to him that I was acquainted with more Jews than that in my country, and that his figures were without a doubt a misprint for 25,000,000." Of Herzl's plan for Palestine, he writes, with tongue darting in and out of cheek: "If that concentration of the cunningest brains in the world was going to be made into a free country...I think it would be politic to stop it. It will not be well to let that race find out its strength. If the horses knew theirs, we should not ride anymore."

Mark Twain's essay rings both poignant and ironic these days, as concerned American Jews obsess over population statistics and fret about the future of their strength and influence. Especially bitter-sweet is the writer's closing line: "All things are mortal but the Jew, all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?" If Mark Twain could have divined the answer, he surely would have bottled it.

What is the Jewish elixir? We ought to know, but somewhere along the way, many of us have misplaced the formula. A traditionalist might tell you that the very question is like the prices at Tiffany's. - If you have to ask, maybe the merchandise isn't for you. Dedication to Torah, the Land of Israel, and the Jewish people - this is the answer, this and no other.

Let me take you on a trip. Not to Tel-Aviv or to Crown Heights, but to a forest in the Galilee, north of Safed, a place called Amukah. First we will have a good steak and a Goldstar beer at Bat-Ya'ar, a dude ranch on a hilltop with a spectacular view of the Hulah Valley, Mount Herman, and the Golan. Then we will drive ten minutes through pine and cypress, down a winding road that dead-ends at a small stone chapel.

Here is buried Yonatan ben Uzziel, a rabbi, who 2000 years ago translated various Biblical books into Aramaic, and is referred to three times in the Talmud as the most brilliant of the many worthy students of the great Rabbi Hillel.

This is a place of pilgrimage, a Jewish Lourdes, of a very special sort. Here people flock, from all over Israel and abroad, to pray for a Jewish mate for themselves or loved one. Apparently Yonatan ben Uzziel never married, and his unfilled soul is believed to hover over his grave to provide succor to those in a similar state. Pay a visit, recite a few psalms, and within a year you'll be under the *huppah* (wedding canopy).

A slender young man stands with his hand on the ancient tomb, reading a prayer from a printed card. May the Almighty, he whispers, grant the wish of one for whom finding a mate is as difficult as *kri'at yam suf*, the parting of the Red Sea. Into every available nook and cranny are stuffed little notes, some of which contain addresses and telephone numbers. Upon the grating that surrounds the women's section of the tomb are hundreds of scarves, scraps of cloth and plastic bags, fetishes left behind by supplicants. A grandmother sets down a bottle of Arak liquor, and a bottle of Sprite as an offering to the long dead rabbi. At the entrance to the grave site stands a Sephardic woman with shining eyes selling amulets, prayer sheets and candles to be lighted in a trough resembling a large barbecue.

Your first reaction is one of alienation, perhaps even repulsion. This sort of rank superstition symbolizes all that's antique and embarrassing about Judaism. In Haiti, okay, but among our people?

If you let down your guard, however, if you close your eyes and open your imagination, you can see that this place embodies the secret that Mark Twain was looking for: the physical link with an ancestral homeland, a staunch belief in divine provenance, a desperate commitment to Jewish marriage and continuity. If you permit it, such a realization can touch you deeply, can even transform you.

You may be surprised when I tell you that much less than a quarter of all American Jews have made a trip to Israel. But here at Rabbi Yonatan ben Uzziel's grave, it's easy to understand why this is so. For some Jews, Israel is irrelevant. To many it seems atavistic and theocratic, and a visit would only confirm these perceptions and serve no useful purpose. But other Jews – a significant number I'd wager – resist their coming to Israel, despite their ethnic pride,



precisely because they are nervous about risking an encounter that may knock their identity out of balance. As a writer friend of mine, an author of a half dozen books on episodic Jewish subjects once explained to me: "I'm afraid that if I go to Israel I will never leave."

To visit Israel, - to experience , even once, even briefly, the heady reality of Jewish sovereignty - is to sip the elixir. No sermon, no lecture, no guilt-tripping waterfall of parental tears can wield the magic of the view from Massada, the spectacle of a succah at the Hilton Hotel, the Hebrew cacophony of a kibbutz kindergarden, Purim on the streets of Tel-Aviv, the silence on the streets on Yom Kippur, or a visit to the Western Wall.

I can't promise you, any more than I can testify to the efficacy of a trip to Rabbi Yonaton's tomb, that if you buy a plane ticket to Israel, or one for your kids, it will change their lives dramatically. But I believe that a few strong drops of Jewish juice might just leave them thirsty for more.

The A.I.N.A. study tour to the Holyland leaves again in March. There is little wonder that many of the participants are repeaters, some like the president of A.I.N.A., and the editor of the SHEKEL number their visits in double digits. Edward Rochette, president of the American Numismatic Association and numismatic author par excellence and his wife Maryann were on the tour in 1993. In six subsequent issues of the Numismatist, journal of the A.N.A., Ed wrote about the magnetism of the Holyland on himself and his wife, and referenced the sites visited in his articles on Israel coins and medals. Ed and Maryann are world travelers. They never savored this emotion before, and they are not Jewish.

Why not plan to inhale some of the Jewish elixir with us next year on our A.I.N.A. tour. You will remember the good feelings forever.



The numismatic illustration of Mark Twain is by the Frankin Mint. The Wedding medal is issued by the IGCM and is used to commemorate bonds of matrimony. The tourism motif is the theme of Israel's 45th Anniversary Independence coin. A hotel room key with the word Israel, the ever present sun, an archaeological motif, part of an ancient synagogue entrance, and a sailboat on the Sea of Galille, symbols of Israel, Land of Tourism, are pictured on the coin.

A Twist of History by Jonathan A. Herbst M.D.

The military strategy and tactics used by the Jews in the First Revolt against the Romans were sorely lacking and unimaginative. Rome fielded the greatest military force the world had ever seen, but, yet even the Roman army had it's vulnerable points. What was really needed for Judea to be victorious was a leader with the brilliance of a Judah Maccabee, or the imagination of a Shimon Bar Kochba. Josephus, Shimon Bar Giora, John of Gischala and the others did just not have the right stuff to lead a successful revolt against the might of Rome. With the exception of the Jewish rout and destruction of the Roman 3rd Legion at Beth Horon pass at the very beginning of the Revolt, after that force under the Syrian governor Cestius Gallus failed to retake Jerusalem, the Jewish forces failed in all the major battles to keep the elements of surprise and initiative on their side. The Jews instead repeatedly allowed themselves to be bottled up inside heavily populated walled towns and cities, protecting large numbers of non-combatants, and invariably heavily outnumbered by the encircling Roman units. The Romans were masters of siege tactics, and in each of these struggles it was only a matter of time before the defensive walls and towers fell before the onslaught of Roman siegecraft. A reviewer of all Roman history would be hard pressed to find a solitary instance of an unsuccessful siege conducted by Roman forces.



RIC-613, Cayon-92, Cohen-236 -- Sestertius, Titus as Caesar under Vespasian, COS-2, struck 72 C.E. Obv.: Laureate bust right. Rev.: Titus on horseback spearing a fallen Jewish soldier, "SC" in field.

Furthermore, the average Jewish soldier was no match man for man against his far more experienced Roman counterpart. The Roman legionnaire of the time was likely not to be Roman by birth, but was instead a volunteer who enlisted from the provinces in the empire, in the hope of acquiring Roman citizenship after serving his full enlistment term of 25 years. He drilled in the art of war daily. It was said of the veteran legionnaire that he played like he was at war, and he warred as easily as if at play. Roman formations in the open field divided the five thousand man legion into ten cohorts, which organized themselves in a checkerboard appearance to face the foe, the most experienced veterans being in the last ranks, and those most

youthful in the fore. Roman weaponry was excellent, both for the individual soldier and in the immense range of larger devices that were used as the legion's artillery to hurl various large projectiles or to scale or batter down enemy fortifications. Roman cavalry was abundant and served in intelligence functions and scouting as well as in battle.

In addition to the actual legionary troops, numerous more lightly armed auxiliary soldiers came from the Roman provinces as well as from the many allied and vassal client kings around the empire. The last Herodian ruler, Agrippa 2nd supplied many such units for the Roman cause. In Vespasian's army, these auxiliaries far outnumbered the legionnaires. While the Roman soldiers were motivated mostly by professionalism and comradeship within the ranks, the auxiliaries were less so.



RIC-427, Cayon-77, BMC-765, sestertertius, Vespasian, Cos-3 struck 71 C.E.; Obv.: Laureate bust right. Rev.: the emperor stands to left of a seven branched palm tree, the symbol of Judea, holding a spear and a parazonium, a ceremonial sword. Judea, personified as a weeping woman, sits below to right. Around is "IVDAEA CAPTA SC"

Neither the legionary nor the auxiliary had the fierce devotion to cause that religious devotion and nationalist ideology brought to the Jews. By contrast, the average Judean rebel was a motivated idealist with virtually no military training or experience. The Jews had not waged war on their own since the time of Antigonus one hundred years before. There were no experienced Jewish commanders or lower ranking officers. The individual Jewish rebel's weaponry was available only with difficulty and would often be inferior to that of the enemy. Catapults, ballistas and counter-siege weaponry was lacking or nonexistent, and few Jews had the expertise to create them. Cavalry was almost totally absent, as few Jews were well trained as mounted horsemen and there were relatively few horses available. However, hills and stones were quite plentiful in Judea. Perhaps, for all of the above reasons the Jews tended to rely on fortresses and walls to keep out their Roman enemies, eschewing more an aggressive stance for the tactical and strategic defensive. This was the mistake that doomed the rebellion. Once walled up inside a city or town, it was only a matter of time before the Romans would be able to break down the fortifications with their highly developed art of siegecraft.

In Judea, the Roman commanders were all well trained and tenacious. They had a certain set plodding "cookbook" method to conducting warfare. And, herein lay the major Roman weakness. For a Judean commander to win a victory against such a foe, vastly imaginative doings would be needed.

Indeed, victories over the Romans could be and were obtained. There was surely nothing magical or invincible about Rome's armies. In the last quarter of the third century B.C.E., Hannibal kept Rome at bay for thirty years using tactics of envelopment of the flanks such as at the battle of Cannae, where a much larger Roman force was completely surrounded by on both flanks and subsequently obliterated, or at Lake Trasimene, where the element of a surprise assault in a fog held the key to a major Carthaginian victory. Hannibal was eventually defeated by Rome, but only due to lack of logistical and material support on the part of a too cocky Carthage.

As noted in Peter Horvitz's article in the November/ December 1993 issue of the Shekel, in 9 C.E. at the battle of the Teutoburger Wald, the German tribes under Arminius destroyed three Roman legions by ambush from both flanks in a rainy forest while the Roman's were in march column and thus out of battle formation. There were no survivors. This decisive victory brought a strategic result of an immediate and permanent Roman withdrawal from most of Germany.

Other Roman defeats can be noted, such as the great Parthian defeat of the Roman Crassus at Carrhae in 53 B.C.E., accomplished by excellent use of armored mounted archers against superior numbers of isolated Roman infantry. Though outnumbered three to one by seven Roman legions, the Parthian general Surenas halted the Roman conquest of Mesopotamia with his tactics of surrounding and then reducing by intense archery from his more mobile horsemen, this Roman infantry caught out in the desert with a lack of water and provisions.



RIC-610, BMC-633*, Cayon-62-Damnatio sesterce, Titus as Caesar under Vespasian, Cos-2, struck 72C.E.; Obv.: Laureate bust right. Rev.: Roma, the people symbol of Rome, in military garb, holds in one outstretched hand Nike, the goddess of victory, and a spear in the other hand. In field "ROMA SC". This coin was defaced with deep cuts on both sides by a contemporary Jew as a curse on both Rome and Titus in an act called Damnatio.

And, lastly, not to be forgotten is our own Shimon Bar Kochba's defeat and destruction of the 22nd legion under circumstances which have unfortunately become lost to history, but which we assume occurred under ambush conditions.

It is not an accident that the only great Jewish victory of the First Revolt came in 66 C.E. at the aforementioned battle at Beth Horan pass after Gallus's retreat from Jerusalem, under conditions of surprise attack on the enemies flanks while he was in column of march, and not battle formation. These were tactics that needed to be repeated, and not forgotten for the illusion of safety behind fortress walls. Achieving this crucial element of surprise in combat was essential to the Jews for any chance of victory. Also, attacking toward the flanks or rear, where an enemy is caught at extreme disadvantage was also necessary for winning. Attacking the enemy while he was in a wadi or a narrow steep sided defile is another tactic that the rugged Judean terrain might have favored. The Jewish forces, sticking to the open country, should have avoided combat until circumstances were to their considerable advantage.

The Jews did have several innate advantages over their Roman oppressors. A superior knowledge of the countryside was definitely a military advantage for the Jews. Furthermore, the Jews were fighting in their own territory on what is known as "interior lines", meaning that they could move their troops around in their small area rapidly from point to point, while the Romans had to maneuver masses of soldiers from far away to the scene of the fighting in Judea. The Roman distance from their provision and manpower sources could have become a major problem for the Roman forces had the Jewish commanders chosen to attack this Roman weakness. Instead of confronting the Roman army in the field, alternatively the Jews could have chosen to sever his supply lines. Also, the local population would have been friendly to Jewish forces, but hostile to the Roman legions, presenting a severe disadvantage for any invader's operations.

Fighting this type of war might well have meant forgoing any serious defense of the major urban population centers, including Jerusalem. It is debatable as to whether this was politically feasible, but the only alternative was history as it has come to pass. It is always fascinating to discuss what might have been had history taken a different twist, and no such issue is more intriguing than the question as to what might have happened to Judaism and the Jewish people had we been successful.

The Jewish Reinforcement Draft Company by Jack H. Schwartz

Most World War I enthusiasts are unaware of the existence of the Jewish Reinforcement Draft Company. Captain Isidore Freedman, in 1916, was requested by the Minister of Militia, General Sir Samuel Hughes, to organize and lead a Jewish battalion for overseas service.

To advertise the formation of this proposed Jewish unit, a printed poster was distributed throughout the eastern region of Canada. World War I posters are quite popular collectibles. The illustrated photograph of this poster was provided by the Toronto Jewish Congress/Canadian Jewish Congress. Herbert Samuel, later to be the first High Commissioner of Palestine, Viscount Reading and Edwin S. Montague, three distinguished leaders of British Jewry are pictured.

A man is shown, partially bound in ropes, being cut free by a soldier. His words "You have cut my bonds and set me free - Now let me help you set others free!" set the theme for the Jewish enlistment. As the Balfour Declaration was issued November 2nd 1917, more than a year after the issuance of the poster, the reason for this comment is not known.

Captain Freedman declined the honor of leadership, but pledged to raise a Jewish Company. He was assisted by foremost members of the Jewish community in Montreal and by Lieut. Alex Solomon, who was later killed in action, and by Lieuts. Sol Rubin, Charles Lesser. Albert Freedman and Herbert Vineberg.

Very little information can be found regarding this unit. In a book "The Jewish Community of Canada", a brief sentence reads "In 1916, a Jewish reinforcement company was raised in Montreal, financially assisted by prominent Jews of the city. In 1917, they were sent overseas." A unit picture, taken in Montreal on March 22nd, 1917, showing 88 men is found in a book "The Jewish of Canada" published in Canada in 1925.

It is believed that several hundred men were recruited, and, after a thorough course of training in Montreal under the above officers, sailed for overseas in 1917. On their arrival in England, the members were dispatched as reinforcements to various Montreal battalions where they all saw service. Numbers were killed and wounded, and all conducted themselves in most praiseworthy manner. Several received promotions, commissions and honors.

The illustrated medallion cap badge in the shape of a Canadian Maple Leaf bears in the center, under the Royal Crown the letters JRDC (Jewish Reinforcement Draft Company) imposed over a Star of David. The inscription Pro Impera is in a semi-circle with the words overseas at the corners. A beaver sits above the word CANADA.

This is probably one of the rarest cap badges, avidly collected by both Judaica as well as World War I collectors.



**THE JEWS THE WORLD OVER LOVE LIBERTY
HAVE FOUGHT FOR IT & WILL FIGHT FOR IT.**



**ENLIST WITH THE INFANTRY REINFORCEMENTS
FOR OVERSEAS**

Under the Command of

Capt, FREEDMAN

Headquarters.

**786 ST. LAWRENCE BOULEVARD.
MONTREAL.**

The Purim Half Shekel

by Rivka Toledano

It was perhaps the megalomania of Prime Minister Haman of Persia which caused his illogical hatred of the Jews. This was triggered in particular by Mordechai's refusal to bow down to him. Haman then asked King Ahasuerus (known in history as King Xerxes) for permission to kill the Jews. In exchange, he was willing to pay 10,000 "talents of silver" to the King's Treasury. The weight of this "talent" is not certain. Two "talents" were in use. A "heavy talent" which is known to have weighed approximately 65 kg., while a "light talent" weighed about 33 kg. We are not sure which talent was actually in use at the time of Haman. In any event, if at the time the denominations were "Talent", "Mina" and "Shekel", Haman was prepared to pay about 30 million Shekalim, an enormous sum for this mass genocide, and what was for him was an ideal "final solution" to the "Jewish Problem". The King readily granted him his request without any payment at all.

The lots ("Purim") that were drawn determined the 13th of Adar as the day for the slaughter of the Jews.

However, Haman's wicked plan was not destined to go as planned, and the Jews were miraculously saved from otherwise sure extermination. Haman perhaps did not realize that the "Shekel" coin was a symbol of life and not death.

In Proverbs 11:4; we are told that "charity (Shekels) delivers from death".

In the time of Moses, during the journeying in the wilderness, the public sacrifices, bought with Half Shekels, served as atonements for the sins of the peoples and thus protected them. In the month of Adar, the "Half Shekels" were publicly requested and payment was due at the beginning of Nisan.

There are some interesting ideas suggested by our Sages as to the reason for payment of a "Half" Shekel and not a full Shekel.

Originally the exile and slavery in Egypt was to last 430 years. (The numerical value of the Hebrew letters in the word "Shekel" is also 430). However, the great Exodus finally came after 215 years, in half the time. The Half Shekel symbolically atones for the other half of the exile.

One of the reasons for paying the Half Shekel was to atone for the sin of the Golden Calf which the Israelites committed in half a day before Moses descended from Mt. Sinai. The women were not a part of this sin, but as a man is considered incomplete and only half, without his wife, only a Half Shekel was necessary.

In time, it has been customary to eradicate, as it were, the wicked intentions of Haman's Shekels, by acting in advance and donating "Half Shekels" to the synagogue for the needy, in the afternoon before Purim. This practice is also in commemoration of the Half Shekel standard payment given by the people to the Temple in Jerusalem.

The Israel State Medal "In Commemoration of the Purim Half Shekel" struck in sterling silver, 27 mm diameter, is true in weight to the Temple Half Shekel. The medal depicts an ancient Half Shekel coin on the obverse and intertwined Stars of David with inscription "Go, gather together all the Jews" (Book of Esther 4:16) on the reverse. This is an expression of the brotherhood of the Jewish people which saved them from Haman. The "Purim Half Shekel" medal is therefore an authentic reminder of the Half Shekel which has played a long and important role in the history of the Jewish people.



please

**PLAN NOW TO SHOW
THIS SHEKEL TO A NEIGHBOR
TO GET A NEW MEMBER FOR AINA**

"Ike the Pike":He lived in the Tub **by Shirlee Hecker** reprinted from The Forward

It was almost two weeks before Passover, and my father brought home a live fish for my mother to cook for the holidays. He knew this fish would be of the finest quality since it came from his landsman on the East Side. He presented the fish to my mother in a bucket, and she put it in the wash tub to fatten him up until she was ready to prepare it.

The fish became the family pet and soon had a name. "Look how he knows me," my father said after just one day. Ike the pike settled in the wash tub in his new home. Each time my father lifted the washtub lid, the fish perked up his head and opened his mouth. My father would feed him little pieces of bread and talk soothingly to him. Poppa was fascinated with Ike's intelligence and would show off his talents to whomever came to the house. "Watch how he greets me."

Although I was very young, I knew that my father had a way with animals, and I believed this fish to be just what my father claimed. "very smart." I knew nothing of the word "conditioned."

One day my father beckoned me over to the tub to look at Ike. "Can you see how much he looks like my friend Levine?" he whispered. "The eyebrows, the one larger eye which held his monocle, the thin lips with the cigar always in place, the high cheekbones?"

Why, he does look like Mr. Levine, thought I, being as imaginative as any five year old should be. "You know," added my father, "when people die, they can come back as anything or anyone."

"Even a fish?" I asked. "That's what he came back as", my father said convincingly.

Then the fateful day arrived and Momma asked Poppa to kill the fish.

"Kill him, are you crazy! That might be Levine, and he stays in the tub forever."

My mother stared at my father and said quietly, "Take that fish out in the yard, and stop telling the child that it's your friend Levine. Levine is dead, and that's how I want the fish."

Poppa left the house, muttering that he would never as long as he lived, lift a hand to his friend.

For almost two days I stared from one parent to the other wondering who was going to win the battle. I was counting on my father, but my mother would not relent. "Izzy", she said, "if you make me kill this fish, I will never forgive you."

"Well Rosie, if you want to see him dead, you be the executioner." And my father sadly left the house again.

Momma walked over to the tub, caught the fish in a big towel, and went into the backyard with it. "Stop," I yelled. "Don't kill him, please!" My mother raised the hammer and aimed at the fish's head.

"Murderer!" I screamed at the top of my lungs. I grabbed her, but she pushed me aside and struck again while the fish kept jumping around. "Die, Levine, Die!" she pleaded and with the third blow Ike was still. Momma burst into tears and ran inside with the fish. I had never seen her cry before.

When Poppa came home, he passed by the tub, but he didn't lift the lid to look inside. He knew just from my mother's face that his friend was really gone.

The first Seder was the next night, and after what seemed like endless praying, Momma got ready to serve. By then, everyone was on edge. I get yelled at a dozen times for various things I claimed I did not do to my older sister, and she almost got hit for the things she did to me. My older sister said she wasn't very hungry and left the dining room.

Momma brought out the gefilte fish platter and uncovered it. There, on the very top, was a fishball with a face. Horseradish for a mouth, carrot for a nose, and raisins for eyes, one of which sported my Charlie McCarthy's doll monocle, just like the one Mr. Levine wore. Between the horse radish lips, was a small celery cigar.

My sister had done a good job on the face, but no one appreciated it, no one laughed, and no one ate any gefilte fish. My father left the table saying he didn't feel good. My mother did nothing but swear under her breath that she was going to kill my older sister, who had by then locked herself in the bathroom.

Needless to say, the fish was not eaten, then or the next day. As far as we knew, my mother, who never wasted food, threw it into the garbage. As for my father, he never brought home a live fish again.



*The Passover
State Medal*

Obverse: a Passover Plate inscribed with the words "Passover — פסח"; Elijah's Cup and the six symbolic foods of the Seder: the shank bone of a lamb, an egg, bitter herbs, Haroseth, parsley or celery ("Fruit of the Earth"), and horseradish, arranged according to the ARI (Rabbi Isaac Lurie).

Reverse: figures in passage from bondage to freedom, on a background of a Matza; around the rim: the 4 words of deliverance from Exodus, chapter 6 (in Hebrew): "וְהוֹצֵאתִי, וְהַצֵּלְתִּי, וְגִאֲלֹתִי, וְלִקַּחְתִּי" ("I will bring you out; I will rid you out of their bondage; I will redeem; I will take you" (to me for a people)).

Services in the Sand by Mark Huber

reprinted from the FORWARD ~~column~~

Founded in 1732, on the island of Curacao, the Mikveh Israel Emanuel synagogue is a living museum. Illuminated by candlelight, the oldest operating synagogue in the western hemisphere is adorned with beautifully carved mahogany woods and artifacts that date back to the inquisition.

But it is the sand that is the *shul's* most striking feature, the beachy grains that carpet the synagogue floor. Locals offer three explanations for the natural broadloom. Some say that the sand is symbolic of the desert encampments during the exodus from Egypt while others suggest that the sand's origins stem from the founder's *Marrano* ancestors who had to muffle the sounds of prayer during the inquisition. Another explanation points to the biblical passage about the Jewish people multiplying like the sands of the seashore.

Though Curacao, as many other Jewish communities, is succumbing to the pressures of intermarriage and assimilation, the symbolic sand at Mikveh Israel is still tread upon by Jews in large numbers. Each year, more than 15,000 people visit this historical monument in the Dutch Caribbean just 42 miles off Venezuela's northern coast. Although the building is in the fourth incarnation on the present site, the tradition bound congregation refuses to replace the stone and mahogany structure with more comfortable amenities like air conditioning and plush seats. "It's our historical duty to maintain the synagogue for our forefathers," says Rene Maduro, the synagogue president, who describes Mikveh Israel as the mother congregation of North and South America. "We're proud of our heritage. It's a part of our legacy."

In the 18th century, Curacao used to be known as a Jewish island. For over 100 years, Jews were the largest ethnic group of the island, even outnumbering the Dutch. Jewish merchants, working with the Dutch West Indian Company have lived in Curacao since 1634, the inception of Holland's colonization. Two hundred trading ships with names like *Mazel Tov* and *Berakha Veshalom* sailed the azure Caribbean captained by Jews from Curacao. The fleet developed as Curacao's merchants traded with their European and South American relatives, until it grew so large it even had its own Jewish maritime insurance company.

Curacao's Jews trace their origins to Sephardim seeking sanctuary from the inquisition. While most Spanish and Portuguese Jews fled to Turkey and North Africa, evidence shows that approximately 200 settlements were established along Brazil's coast by *Marranos*, Jews who publicly appeared as Roman Catholics but secretly continued their Jewish traditions and beliefs.

Archaeological evidence indicates that as early as 1636 a synagogue was built in Recife, a Dutch controlled city in Brazil. But after the Portuguese drove the Dutch out of Brazil in 1651, a New World inquisition was carried out there forcing many of Recife's Jews to flee to Curacao. There they built the island's first synagogue and enjoyed full citizenship rights in 1645, twelve years ahead of their sister community in Amsterdam, and a century before similar rights were extended to Jews in the 13 colonies in 1740.

Traces of early Jewish life in Curacao are found today on the island's oldest buildings, often marked with dates in Hebrew numerals. Descendants of the early Jewish merchant families still operate many of Curacao's most prominent enterprises. Other than in Israel, Curacao is the only place in the world where banks close on Yom Kippur. But being the oldest Jewish synagogue in the Caribbean does pose problems for the 350 member Reconstructionist congregation. The government promotes the *shul* as a tourist attraction, but doesn't provide and funding support. In the absence of guides, volunteers show visitors around five days a week and the congregation hosts many guests at its weekly Shabbat kiddushes.

Curacao's Jews raise thousands of dollars annually to maintain the old Sephardic synagogue. Last year alone, over 40,000 dollars was raised just to replace the wooden rain troughs. One of the biggest problems is family planning as many of the younger people leave the island after high school and intermarriage at a rate of 50% is a problem. 50% of the congregation is over sixty years old.

But the sand still lines Curacao's synagogue floor, it hasn't slipped through the hourglass yet.

The numismatic illustration is found in a 1982 50 Gulden coin, issued by the Netherlands Antilles. It commemorates the 250th Anniversary of Mikveh Israel Emanuel which was founded in 1732. The obverse shows a bust portrait facing left of Beatrix, Queen of the Netherlands. The reverse shows the Mikveh Israel Emanuel Synagogue in the center, surrounded with the text "Synagoge Mikveh Israel Emanuel 1732-1982", with the value 50.G directly below the synagogue building. This issue was struck in proof condition only.



The Free Coinage Gold Mining Co.

by Edward Schuman

There remains today an abandoned mining town in Colorado with the name of *Altman*. When *Altman* was incorporated in 1896, it was at 10,620 ft. the highest incorporated town in the United States. At one time, it was a social headquarters for the Cripple Creek miners. Among the town's attributes were saloons, hotels, dining halls and houses of prostitution in addition to regular rural mining and mercantile trade establishments. By 1898 its population was more than 2000.

This town was named for Sam Altman, a Jewish man, who constructed and operated a saw mill in the early 1890s, supplying lumber for the mines during the gold boom.

His first venture into mining speculation occurred after he loaned a Winfield Scott Stratton \$900. This was a loan which Stratton eventually parlayed into millions of dollars. At this point, Altman started to learn all he could about geology and mining. He began roaming into the nearby hills, staking out mining sites he thought might prove profitable. One such claim was the "Free Coinage Mine" which reflected his belief on free coinage of silver which had come under attack due to the falling prices of this metal. At that time the United States government was the largest purchaser of silver bullion for coinage, and legislation to restrict silver purchases was proposed. The Free Coinage mine proved to be a bonanza and Altman was soon a millionaire.

The illustrated share certificate of this mine, #247, for 10,000 shares, printed in black, green and gold, was issued April 9th, 1894. It is signed by S.J. Altman as president, as well as cancelled by him at a later date.

Sam Altman went on to speculate in Cripple Creek mines for a number of years. He later moved to Colorado Springs where he built a small palace and became a well known citizen of this city.



CLUB



BULLETIN

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INS OF CLEVELAND - The December meeting was held at the home of Sanford Brown. For discussion topics, Fred Ross displayed some historical coppers along with several other "obtuse" numismatic items. Included in "The Agora" was a paragraph stating: "If you can obtain a copy, check out the absolutely exceptional article in the Dec. 6th issue of World Coin News by Dr. Gary P. Laroff, entitled "Israel: Variety Reminds Hobby of Independence Fight." The article is an in-depth study of the 1948-1949 aluminum, Holon produced, 25-mils, with illustrations clearly showing how to identify each. An excellent reference."

INS OF LONG ISLAND - Exhibit topics for the November meeting were: 1 pruta, Hasmonean coins, 1959 Exiles and new items. Discussion and planning was held regarding the annual Chanukah party. A video presentation about the Holocaust Museum was also shown. Included in the newsletter: "The Great Debate - In rabbinic times, the famous schools of Hillel and Shammai debated the order of lighting the Hanukkah candles. Shammai's followers held that 8 candles should be lit the first night and 1 fewer each succeeding night, representing the gradual depletion of the little jug of pure oil. Hillel's students believed we should begin with a single candle and add one each night, because the symbol of holiness should grow. As usual, the school of Hillel prevailed and we follow his order today."

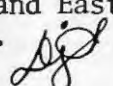
ISRAEL COIN CLUB OF LOS ANGELES - The annual holiday get together was held at the home of Ruth Ross with a special buffet. On hand as one of the exhibits was the booklet one obtains when visiting the new Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C. Looking through it I found it fascinating and moving.

INS OF LOS ANGELES - Dr. Thomas Fitzgerald was the special speaker at the November meeting, "The Beginnings of Jewish Coinage" his topic. The annual holiday festivities were held at the December meeting beginning with a lavish buffet. Special door prizes were drawn for and a special prize of a decorated tree was claimed. The game "Coin-o" drew a lot of interest and fun. (Your's truly didn't win anything).

INS OF NEW YORK - Exhibit topics for the December meeting were: 10 prutot, Bar Kochba coins, 1948 5-pd paper, 1961 Bar Mitzvah commem, Bar Mitzvah medal and Chanukah tokens. At the January meeting, exhibit topics were held on a little different topic: counterfeits and fakes - double dies, misprints, forgeries, mistakes, overstrikes, mis-strikes, errors and anything else that shouldn't have been but was.

WESTCHESTER ISRAEL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY - Discussion topic at the December meeting was the Hanukiah and anything connected to it either numismatic or any other way. (The Hanukiah is the best known symbol of the holiday, with 8 candles plus the central one; closely allied and often confused with the Menorah which has 6 candles plus the central one). Topics for the January meeting were the remaining cities of the Decapolis not previously studied, and numismatic items relating to the Zionist movement.

COMMENTS FROM DJS - I am guessing that the annual AINA tour will be on its way to Israel by the time this issue of the Shekel reaches you and more importantly I hope to be one of the participants if all goes well. I am getting concerned about not hearing from several of the INS clubs that usually send me their newsletters on a real regular basis. This could mean one of few things. They may now meet bi-monthly or have stopped doing newsletters to cut down on costs. For whatever reason I hope to hear from these groups soon. Also these past two months since the last issue has been the first that no correspondence was received other than the newsletters. Very unusual. Our INS groups are struggling to survive and need your help. You say how? By your attendance at the meetings and your participation. All the conventions are struggling for the same reasons. Help your club in 1994. Attend and participate. Passover and Easter greetings to one and all. Be well, be happy. . . .



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